

## **Survival Drills Are Important – They Can Save Your Life!**

**Fishing vessels have a whole catalog of equipment on board – fishing gear, spare engine parts, groceries for the cook – and most of the time, you only make room for something because you know you're going to be needing it during the trip.**

**But in addition to these things, each commercial fishing vessel has safety and lifesaving equipment such as fire apparatus, lifesaving gear including personal floatation devices and survival suits, and larger pieces such as liferafts. These are the things you hope you never need – but everyone on board has to know how to use them in an emergency. How can you best do that?...by holding drills each month with all the crew. Then, make sure they are completely familiar with all the lifesaving and fire response equipment, procedures on how to use them, and with the location of all the materials. If you belong to the crew of a fishing vessel, you need to be aware of and practice all these things in case there is an emergency on board.**

**What do you need to know about safety drills on your vessel to be sure you and your crew are prepared in case of an emergency?**

**The Coast Guard Uninspected Vessels regulations require these types of activities, plus others that you may need to put into practice on board your vessel:**

- 1. The master or person in charge of each vessel must ensure that drills are conducted**

**and instruction is given to each individual on board at least once each month. The training must include:**

- Abandoning the vessel**
- Firefighting in different locations on board the vessel**
- Recovering an individual from the water**
- Minimizing the affects of unintentional flooding**
- Launching survival craft and recovering lifeboats and rescue boats**
- Donning immersion suits and other wearable personal flotation devices**
- Donning a fireman's outfit and SCBA if one is on board**
- Making a voice radio distress call and using visual distress signals**
- Activating the general alarm and reporting inoperative fire & alarm systems**

- 2. Each person participating in drills must act as if there were an actual emergency. Everyone must participate in all activities on board, breaking out and using emergency equipment, testing all the alarms and detection systems, and putting on protective clothing and immersion suits, if the vessel is so equipped.**